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LANGUAGE-CORRELATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

INDO-EUROPEAN philology is a hundred years old. It was more than a century ago that classical scholars at length succeeded in laying their profane hands upon the jealously guarded sacred books of India. Of the discovery and mastery of Sanskrit was born modern philology. It was in 1808 that the genius of Frederick Schlegel, from the mute testimony of words, proclaimed to a protesting clergy, to reluctant scholars, and to an astonished Europe, that we sturdy Teutons are kith and kin not only with the Roman and the Greek, but with the Persian and the black Hindoo.

Schlegel's discovery has been likened to that of Columbus. No other man ever so suddenly threw open to scholarly exploration such a limitless world. The period of exploration that followed more than justified the apparently extravagant anticipation aroused by the brilliant discovery. The plodding industry of a Bopp, a Rask, a Grimm, furnished the data for the demonstration of Schlegel's theory. There is no chapter in the history of any science more interesting than that which recounts the splendid victories during her first half century of modern philology.

Nor has the advance made by the science of language during the closing half century been, in one respect, less gratifying than that of the preceding fifty years. The activity of our leaders in philological thought has continued untiring. That their efforts have not been in vain, one glance at our bookshelves reveals. Here are Gothic, Old English, Old High German, Old French grammars; here is Sweet's *History of English Sounds;* etymological dictionaries of Skeat and of Kluge; Skeat's volumes on English etymology; Max Müller's, Whitney's general treatises on philology; comparative grammars of Latin and Greek; comparative grammars of English and German. Here is *Fick's Indogermanisches Wörterbuch*, actually

restoring in its several volumes the pre-ethnic vocabulary of our Aryan race. Here finally is Brugmann's great work — a comparative grammar, in 2400 pages, of the Indo-European race. It is only in the line of comparative syntax that great discoveries remain to be made. Our first proposition then is this : Indo-Germanic philology so far as phonology, morphology, and lexicography are concerned, *has been written.*

Now propositions sometimes have corollaries. Our proposition has one. It is a simple corollary, but there are some whom it concerns that have never grasped it. Here it is: We secondary language-teachers are teaching in Latin, Greek, German, English, related tongues — tongues the relations of which are solved, tongues for the correlation of which modern philology all the past century has been busily weaving her interconnecting webs of truth and of fact. And this position in which we language-teachers find ourselves is a new one. Our predecessors of a few decades ago were not so circumstanced. Methods of instruction that were all right for them, environed as they were, may be for us under these new conditions quite defective.

Before we proceed further we must remind you that the collateral is not the only relationship existing between Latin or Greek, and English. Probably over three fourths of our vocabulary are derived from Latin and Greek. And philology has been just as busy to solve this lineal as to solve the cognate relationships of our tongue. Our Latin words of the first period — words that came into English as a result of the Roman military occupation of Gaul and of Britain — and our Latin words of the second period — words that are in English as a result of the introduction of Christianity in 597 — brought in as they were during the Old English period, and becoming to all intents and purposes genuine English words, went through the same letter-changes in their later development into modern English as the English words tnemselves did. What these changes were is now known (*cf.* such works as Sweet's *History of English Sounds*) The student who understands the historical development of his own English will have no difficulty with these Latin derivatives of the first and of the second period.

As Latin-derived words of the third period we class the terms brought to us by the Norman-French. Norman-French was simply corrupt, late, popular Latin — a popular dialect that had been mouthed over twice by foreign tongues. But the development of French from popular (and its relation to classical) Latin has been solved. The general laws of French philology are now understood, the vowel and the consonant changes have been carefully tabulated (see Schwann's *Grammatik des Altfranzoesischen*, etc.). The changes too, that the Norman-French words underwent when transplanted into English and during their subsequent development, have been worked out (*cf.* Skeat's *English Etymology*, Vol. II). In short the line is at last complete between the classical Latin word and its form in English now as a Latin-derived term of the third period. . . . Latin words of the fourth period, those adopted during these more recent centuries either direct from Latin or through the French, offer no difficulties to the student who understands words of the third period.

Thus modern philology has made possible systematic, scientific correlation — both lineal and collateral — of secondary language-studies. The question we wish to ask next is: How much of this correlation work is actually being done? Is the high-school pupil getting any systematic knowledge of the cognate and the lineal affinities of the languages he is studying, or are we teachers still teaching English, German, Latin, Greek, as though they were unrelated tongues?

The writer of this paper went through a good high school and through one of our oldest and best colleges, and never found out what cognate words are. Many other college men testify that their experience is the same. In the course of a few years hundreds of our high-school graduates find their way to our State Normal. We have had the opportunity to sound many of these on this subject, and have yet to find one who knows anything worth mentioning about either the lineal or the collateral relationships of English.

A few months ago the author read a paper before the language-teachers of a large city. About forty were present.

None of them seemed to know the general laws of French philology, and only one showed any working acquaintance with Grimm's law. They surely are not teaching what they do not know! The published courses of study of our best high schools, our state course itself, our text-books, the report of the Committee of Ten, the evidence of high-school teachers everywhere, the entrance requirements of our colleges, indeed all the facts from all the sources unite in the testimony that even the simplest rudiments of modern philology have not as yet received merited attention in secondary institutions.

Discovery and exploration are generally followed by settlement. It is only after the fertile continent has become an economic beehive that we feel its mission is realized. In the intellectual world something of the same kind is true. The great discovery, conceived in the brain of the scholar must become in the following ages the inheritance of the commonalty. That is the way the intellectual world progresses. And we feel little sympathy with the scholarly recluse who from his labor can bring forth in the world of matter or in the world of mind, nothing to the utility of the masses. Natural science has seeped out of the study of the specialist into the college, the secondary school, the grades. Economics will follow the example. The mathematical problems that once puzzled the brains of intellectual giants, are now handled by us all. No masterpiece of literature is too precious to be served up to our pupils. The theories and the discoveries of one age are the common property of the next. Now why is it that in the field of philology alone, magnificent discoveries and splendid truths have contributed nothing to the general culture of our race?

Why then this neglected field in secondary language-study? It can hardly be from any lack on the part of teachers of appreciation in general of the value of correlation. To connect in teaching fundamentally related topics is simply the dictum of common sense. A new educational psychology, voicing this common-sense doctrine, has emphasized the extent to which the acquirement of knowledge depends upon interest, and interest upon the relating of what we know to what is to be acquired.

The good teacher nowadays in introducing a new subject seeks to make the most of the "apperceptive mass" of his pupils.

Nor is the correlation we are urging one that is far-fetched or strained. That is almost precluded by the very nature of the case. Greek, Latin, Teutonic — represented by English and German — are sisters. It is only the more fundamental characteristics of their common mother that they have retained through so many centuries.

Is the work we propose too difficult for the secondary school? No. As little or as much of it as one pleases may be done, and hardly anything could be simpler than the facts and principles that in an educational arrangement must come first. What simpler than the general statement, with appropriate illustrations, of Grimm's law? It is absurd to claim that pupils who can handle the problems in algebra and in geometry our pupils do, cannot do this work. Moreover, all these philological matters can be approached in the most natural manner in the world. There is hardly one principle of consequence to us operative in the whole science of Indo-European philology, the workings of which we may not see right in our own tongue; there is scarcely a vowel or a consonant-change in the development of primitive Aryan into Latin, Greek, Teutonic, or again in the metamorphosis of Latin through Norman-French into English, not illustrated in the speech of some one right around us or not easily explainable by some physiological law. Our pupils may be led through homely everyday phenomena, to the knowledge of the most momentous philological facts. The Irishman, the German, the negro, in his attempts to speak English, the little child learning to talk, the man who lisps, furnish us the material with which to illustrate the philology we wish to teach.

Now for our next question — the one that the logic of this argument has finally forced us to: Is the reason that these fundamentally related tongues are not in this day of correlation taught as one might expect related tongues to be, because the teachers do not know the subject-matter involved?

This is a ticklish question. About the hardest thing on earth for a teacher to admit is that there is something connected with

the subject he is teaching that he does not know. Even harder is it to have another tell him this. The man who undertakes to do so will be called all sorts of names. It is high time, however, that there be some plain talk upon this point, and the author is going to answer his own interrogation bluntly. The reason why the great bulk of good teachers do not correlate in their class rooms these related tongues, is that they have not sufficient familiarity with modern philological discoveries. Teachers may think they do not believe in our language-correlation—and they do not, but they would believe in it if they had a thorough knowledge in the line. The human mind is so constituted that they could not help it. And they would make practical use of their knowledge if they had it—not to do so would mean the continual repression of a natural instinct. The introduction of this matter into secondary instruction is simply contingent upon the knowledge of the teachers.

We do not say that teachers have read nothing in the direction of philology. It is quite possible to have read considerable in philological lines without being able to make much practical use of one's labors. This often happens when the attention has been directed chiefly towards the mastery of Sanskrit or even towards the study of Latin-Greek comparative grammar. The university practice of making the first philological work a year or two's grind on Sanskrit, can hardly be strongly enough condemned. Philology like charity should begin at home. Sanskrit played such an important part in the birth of Indo-European philology that the opinion is abroad that it is the *sine qua non* of all comparative language-study. We do not underestimate the value to the specialist of a knowledge of Indic, but the would-be correlator of Latin and English, for example, will find some acquaintance with early English and its development through the Norman-French period into modern English, a hundred times more serviceable. The science of language needs to come down to earth occasionally. Like Schiller's Jungfrau our fair goddess seems to show a disheartening tendency to wander on the mountains and a dread of descending to dwell in the lowly huts of men.

We have just one more question. Why have not the teachers as a rule the philological knowledge necessary for this work?

There are several reasons. They themselves were not taught it in school. It has hardly as yet dawned upon many that there is any such field for labor. A few *have* a more or less definite knowledge of Grimm's law—even these usually know nothing of the vowels—but the teacher must know far more philology than that if he is to make much impression upon his pupils. Again, although philology is a hundred years old it is less than half that time since the vowels were mastered, and the science of language was, so far as practical results are concerned, in a very unsatisfactory state until the development of every Aryan sound was thoroughly understood. There is too a tendency on the part of a few teachers to think that what they were taught is good enough for their pupils and a disinclination to settle down to dig out new things for them. But the reason I would emphasize most is that there are not the suitable books for teachers in these lines. There is today no simple manual that gives in concise form the main results of modern philological thought. Teachers must gather these facts from a dozen different works, most of them costly, technical, some of them not printed in English. The two Latin grammars, until very recently almost exclusively in use, based their derivation matter—so far had they lagged behind the times—on the old belief that the parent speech had only three vowels. One of them actually informs us that *vox* is cognate with *voice*, and *navis* with *navy*. One of the best of our first year Latin books tells us that English *know* is derived from Latin *nosco* and that *care* is from *cura*. The same book does not know that *joy* is from *gaudiam*, *feat* from *factum*, *eager* from *acer*, *copy* from *copiam*, etc. The above all shows that teachers are not alive upon these things. Publishers will scramble to revise their books when teachers know an inferior article. The one or two creditable publications that have appeared recently seem to think that to the English student it is more useful to correlate Greek and Latin than it is to correlate Latin or Greek and English. There is as yet no Latin-English comparative grammar though there are several Latin-Greek grammars.

Now to suggest in a paragraph or two a course for the high-school in language-correlation. As concerns the cognate relationships then:—Some acquaintance with Old English with the chief sound and letter-changes in its development into modern English. . . . A good working knowledge of the comparative phonology of English, German, Latin, Greek; the introduction to each sound-change being made through some similar phenomenon that has come under the pupil's observation. . . . Familiarity with several hundred groups of cognates. Especial attention to cognates that are of an extraordinary interest through striking sound-changes, variations in meanings, historical suggestiveness, etc. . . . Application of the knowledge of phonology in a dozen or more practical fields—as in the identification of the ablaut-series of English, Greek, German, Latin; the identification of their numeral systems; reconciliation of their principal declensions and remnants of declensions; of their pronominal systems; of their chief formative suffixes; identification of English and German umlauts. . . . Teutonic and Indo-European history gleaned from cognates and their classification. . . . Something of the history of philology, classification of the languages of the earth. Theories of the origin of language.

As regards the lineal relationship of English and Latin (or Greek):—Old English and its development as above. . . . Our Latin and our Greek derivatives of the first and of the second periods, what they are, their nature, the changes they have undergone. . . . Differences between classical and popular Latin. . . . The general laws of French philology. Table of sound-changes and practice in using it. Each sound-change correlated with some such phenomenon already known. Our Latin derivatives of the third period, classified to illustrate vowel-changes and consonant-changes; classified again by suffixes. All the typical groups of derivatives. The character of words of the third period. The history they tell. Especial attention to the most interesting words. . . . Words of the fourth period, their nature, their classes, their changes. . . . Other foreign elements in English.

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